(c) what steps have been taken by Govt, to increase value added in these exports; and

(d) whether the clauses of new import-export policy regarding invoices in dollar terms is causing considerable hardship to the gems and jewellery exports?

and (b) The target, import of raw materials and exports of gem and jewellery during tre last five years were-

(Value Rs. in crores,)

Year	Target	Imports	Exports
1991-92	6500	5171·01	7193·50
1990-91	5950	3914·47	5360·24
1989-90	5500	4400·00	5479·37
1988-89	4400	3319·00	4565·28
1987-88	2606	2095·00	2652·56

(SOURCE: Gem and Jewellery EPC)

(c) Exporters of gem and jewellery are provided access to raw materials through imprest and replenishment licences which give greater incentive for higher value addition.

(d) No such hardship has been brought to the notice of Government or to the notice of the Gem and Jewellery Export Promotion Council.

Reducing restriction on U.S. and other foreign investments in India

107. SHRI MURLIDHAR CHANDRAKANT BHANDARE: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state;

(a) whether the Foreign Secretary in his discussions with US representatives during his last visit to USA had agreed to reducing of restrictions on US and other foreign investments in India and to protecting intellectual property rights; and

(b) if so, to what extent?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) and (b) During his visit *to* Washington from 9-11 March, 1992, the Foreign Secretary also had a meeting with the U.S. Trade Representatives, In this meeting, the Uruguay Round issues came up for discussion, especially pertaining to negotiations on Textiles and Clothing, Market Access, und Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPs). The two sides agreed to maintain bilateral con. tacts at Geneva for further discussion on these issues. No commitment was made on India's behalf for reducing restrictions on U.S. and other foreign investments or for protecting intellectual property rights.

India's exports to hard currency areas in dollars terms

108. SHRI DINESHBHAI TRIVEDI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) what was the total export in Dollar terms from India to hard currency areas during the years 1989-90, 1990-91 and 1991-92-

(b) what was the total import during the same period;

(c) what action Government propose to take to reduce the balance of payment problem; and

(d) what is the earliest time Government expect to have a favourable balance of payment situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM); (a) The total exports to th_e Hard Currency Areas amounted to US $ 13518 million during the year 1989-90, US $ 14964 million during the year 1990-91 and US $ 14345 million during the eleven months (April—February) of 1991-92.

(b) The total import from the Hard Currency Areas amounted to US $ 19663 million during the year 1989-90, US $ 22394 million during the year 1990-91 and US $ 16862 million during the first eleven months (April—February) of 1991-92.

(c) Reducing the trade deficit and current account deficit is the key element in the strategy to improve the Balance of Payments problem. Steps have already been taken and are being taken to stimulate production and thereby raise exportable surpluses. The system of export linked imports has been liberalised substantially in the new Import-Export Policy. Besides, the new scheme of Partial Convertibility of Rupee is expected to increase foreign exchange remittances in the 'invisibles' account so as to help reduce the Current Account deficit.

(d) There is little likelihood of achieving a surplus in the current account of the balance of payments in the medium term.

Misuse of REP licence and Exim Scrips

109. SHRI DHULESHWAR MEENA; Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a major racket involving the misuse of REP/additional licences and Exim Scrips has recently been unearthed;

(b) if so, the *modxus operandi* of the racketeers;

(c) the windfall gains following the partial convertibility of the rupee made by them;

(d) whether Government have examined the possibility of the connivance/collusion of the bank personnel in this racket; and

(e) what steps have been taken by Govt, to recover the amount pocketed by these unscrupulous importers and to plug the loopholes in the existing procedure in consultation with the Reserve Bank of India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM); (a) to (c) It has been reported that some of these licences were lost or pilfered Cases have come to notice where the Exim Scrip licence were obtained on the basis of documents subsequently found to be forged. No estimates can be made of th_e gains in such cases

(d) and (e) Cases of possible mis-representation, fraud, forgery, etc. have been referred by the Licensing authorities to the police for investigation and appropriate action against the offenders including those who connived in these offences. The Exim-Scrip licence scheme has been discontinued.

All the licence issuing authorities have been directed that the full details of Exim Scrips/REP licences which were issued on the basis of documents subsequently found to fee forged, and which were cancelled, should be furnished t_0 the State Bank